

# NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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***For Immediate Release***

**FEBRUARY 24, 2004**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on February 23, 2004, **KAREEM A. BOWIE**, age 31, of Chicago, Illinois, was convicted following trial to the Court of seven counts of mail fraud under Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341.

The evidence at trial proved that from on or about September 25, 2002, and continuing to on or about November 30, 2002, the exact dates being unknown, KAREEM A. BOWIE devised, operated and conducted a scheme to defraud, and to obtain money by means of false pretenses, from the parents of current and former students at Southern Illinois University (SIU) at Carbondale, Illinois. During this time frame, BOWIE sent a letter via U.S. Mail from a company BOWIE created called FMM Service Department. The letter appeared to be a "Past Due" notice and was sent to the parents of current and former SIU students. The letter requested payment of either \$86 or \$25 for the student's participation in a job search program run by FMM. The evidence showed that FMM was not a legitimate company and that there was no job search program.

Over 250 letters were sent to parents of current and former SIU Students. The evidence showed that numerous parents of current and former SIU students sent through the United States Mail checks payable in the amount of either \$86 or \$25 to FMM Service Department.

Each of the separate seven counts charged that on various dates between October 22, 2002, and November 18, 2002, for the purpose of executing and in order to effect the scheme to defraud and obtain money, BOWIE did knowingly cause to be sent, delivered and moved by the United States Postal Service from various individuals money payable to FMM Service Department.

Each of the seven (7) counts carries a possible penalty of up to 5 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a term of up to three years supervised release.

BOWIE's sentencing is scheduled for May 27, 2004, in the United States District Court in Benton, Illinois.

The investigation was conducted by the United States Postal Service and the Southern Illinois University Police Department.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney George A. Norwood.